



# QUEER

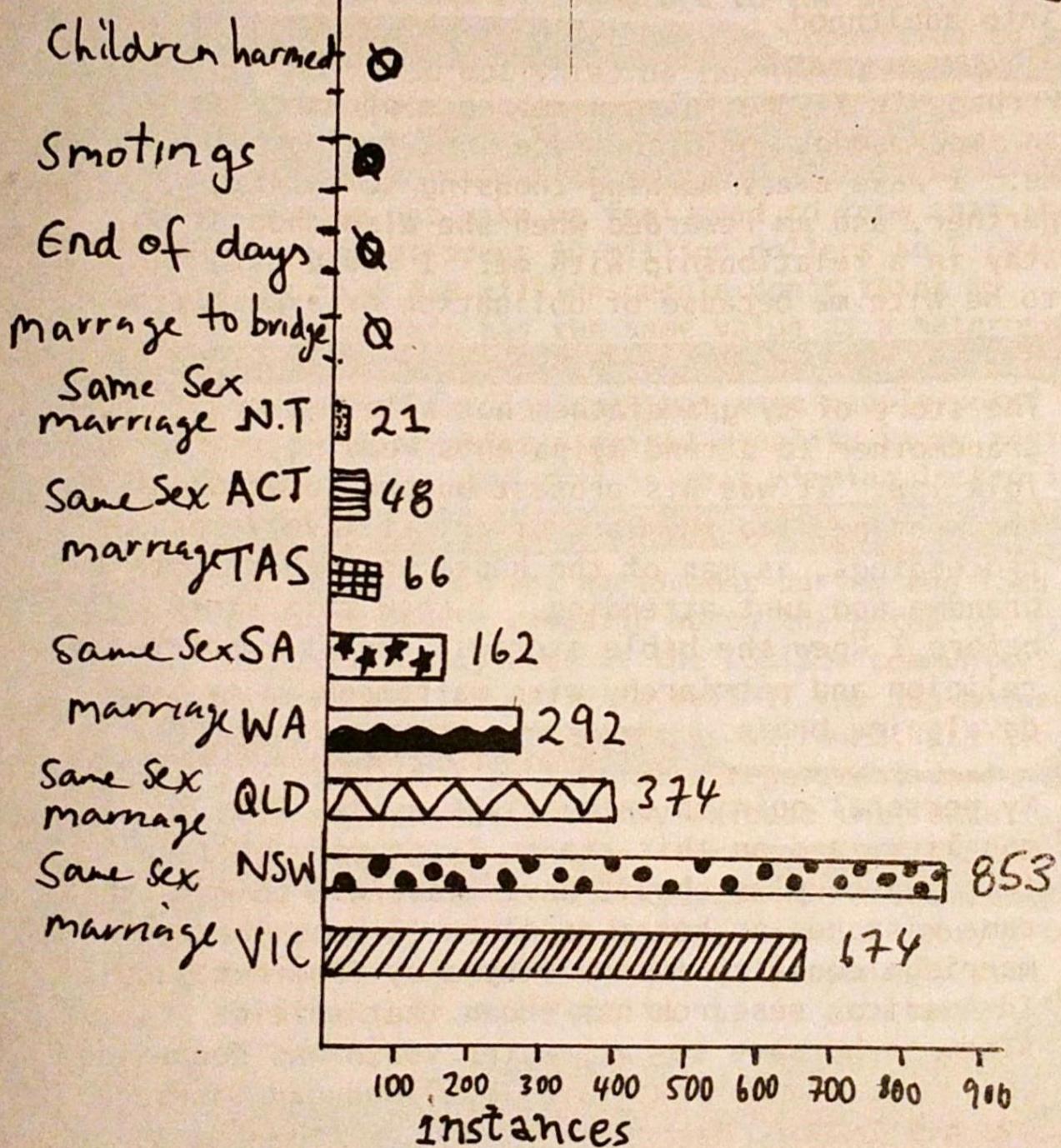
Marriage is an issue that has many feminists conflicted. Historically marriage has helped maintain the capitalist patriarchy, with fathers passing ownership of daughters to another male for the cost of a dowry. The women are then kept subdued by multiple pregnancies- preferably male- to keep the industrial world turning. Thankfully modern day women have more means for independence, and in Australia at least most marriages are for love. My feminist view is that I support women in doing anything they believe is in their best interests, which for some people includes marriage.

This issue I wanted to talk about same sex marriage and particularly the process of the postal vote.

I see same sex marriage as a feminist issue as it affects queer women, and indirectly all women. Same sex marriage itself subverts the gender norms of heterosexual marriage, perhaps offering an alternative paradigm to heterosexual married couples. The idea of a virginal wife in white, women carrying caring duties on top of paid employment and women doing most of the emotional labour has to be reconsidered when a recognised marriage may not include a woman at all. It may also alleviate the idea that men must propose, earn more and make all the decisions when a man might not be included in marriage at all either.

# Post Marriage Equality Australian Statistics\*

\* from May 2018



I "came out" as not wanting to get married long before I came out as queer, and the reasons were, and are, slightly subconscious. I do love the idea of love, and don't get me wrong, if weddings are a love fest they do make me squee. PDAs, and other gestures of kindness and affection between friends and lovers also make me squee. Despite the assurances that this feeling was just a phase, my agnostic option on marriage it has stayed with me into adulthood.

Perhaps it is the false permanence of marriage in an impermanent world that does not feel genuine to me. I wake every morning choosing to be with my partner, and am rewarded when she also chooses to stay in a relationship with me. I would hate her to be with me because of obligation or expectation.

The story of my grandfather not allowing my grandmother to attend my parents wedding is family folk law. It was his protest on the location of the wedding, and the lack of priest involvement in proceedings, as man of the house he forbade both my grandma and aunt attending. I knew this story before I knew the bible stories, and it connected religion and patriarchy with matrimony in my developing brain.

My personal opinion on marriage aside, I am pro-equality, and on this stance I strongly believe that gay couples should have the right to make the same mistakes as hetro couples. I hope that marriage equality is one step away from homophobia. In America, research has shown that suicide attempts by same sex attracted youth has decreased by 14% in states that have legalised gay marriage.

Most days of my life as a queer feminist are completely mundane. Most days I just go about the business of living life in suburban Brisbane, vacuuming up dog fur and sleeping though my alarm.

For months last year my stomach was a vortex of acid, as it seemed to be open season for people to tell me exactly what they think of my relationship. Frankly, I have heard enough gen-pop value statements on this topic over the past decade to know that these opinions are generally not enlightened, eloquent or well developed. If you are not a close friend, I prefer that you keep your options about my relationship to yourself.

As I rolled on my rainbow socks and added my placard and my signature to the debate, the irony did not pass me by that the opposition to equity were also motivated by the idea of saving the children.

*Saw a rainbow today*  
It does not make me feel good to know that the government spent 80 million dollars so I could find out that 4.8 million people don't think my relationship has the same value as a heterosexual monogamous relationship. Certainly I was not surprised to find out that more people voted against than for marriage equality in my regional home town. And this is what winning looked like

Was the vitriol and harassment during the long marriage equity campaign worth the potential future increased acceptance of the LGBTIQ+ community? It is probably too early to tell if the gap between LGBTIQ+ suicide attempts has narrowed, and even if all homophobic attacks were reported I don't think that anyone will publicly release that data.

I have also included in this issue a story from a queer friend, Wolfram, who is personally pro-marriage, in an effort to create a balanced perspective.

Hope you enjoy reading.

*Saw a rainbow today*  
Jess XXX

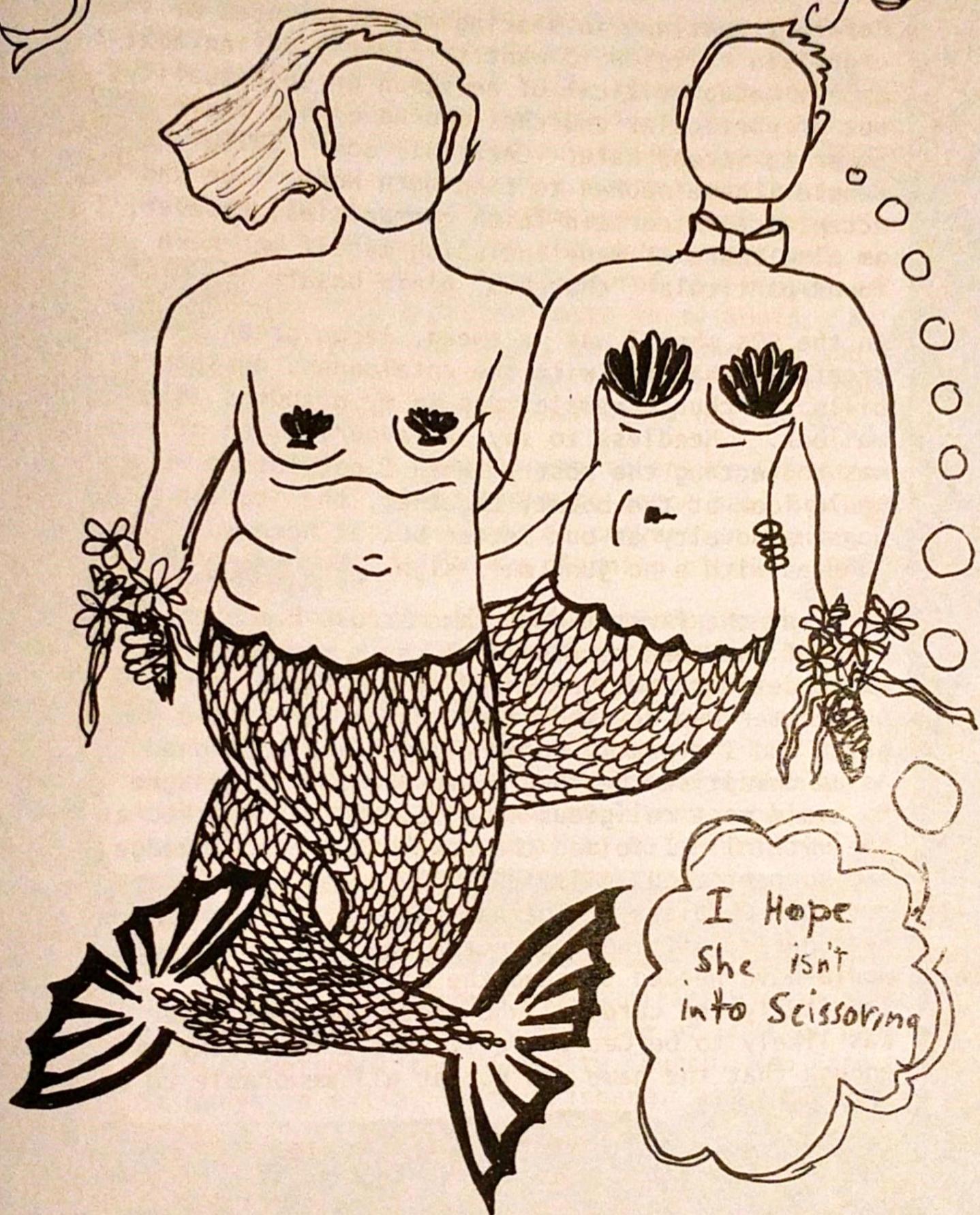
### My inheritance

My grandma made her own wedding dress from lace curtains. Everything including fabric was short after the war, and as the stories go, ladies were encouraged to make everyday dresses without pockets to save on fabric. The only thing they were not short on was societies expectation of women. On the morning of her wedding grandma was ironing her dress with a petrol iron and it caught on fire- the iron and the dress- and the flaming iron was tossed out the window. The burnt fabric was disguised under strategically placed layers of lace. It may have been an omen, but I am not sure what of, as my grandparents were married more than 60 years, and were only separated by death.

My mother made her own wedding outfit from cream linen, scattered with light yellow bottle brush flowers. Much less forgiving when she burnt it while ironing on her wedding morning, as it was completely devoid of lace. She held a strategically placed bouquet in pictures, and I would never have known if I didn't see them for myself. The burns had yellowed with time, and the outfit was too small for myself or my sister even by the time we were in primary school. Mum blames the hormones in chicken for our larger body habitus.

I have considered what I would wear if I ever got married, in that abstract sense of would you rather lose your arm or your leg in an accident. The conclusion I reached is that in a wedding with two brides I could wear whatever the fuck I wanted, but I should probably choose something that did not need ironing.

# Some-Mer-Marriage



Church while queer

The largest, loudest and fiercest opposition to marriage equality in Australia comes from the Australian Christian Lobby(ACL).

Before I continue in sharing my experiences of organised religion, I want to clearly define that I am not being critical of religion or spirituality, but of particular churches who have used their power to spread hate. Certainly some LGBTIQ+ people I have spoken to find much hope, love and acceptance in certain faith communities, however, I am also aware of many including myself who have found particular "churches" plain unsafe.

In the 90s when I was a tween, large green treefrog cohabited with the catalogues, newspapers, bills and church newsletters in my grandmas mailbox. Needless to say, a favourite job of mine was collecting the post. When I got inside we would look at the bounty together, the "cattle dogs" a novelty as our letter box at home was adorned with a no junk mail sign.

This was the first time I came across homophobic view of the then cardinal. I can't remember the exact details, but one third of his three column newsletter was devoted to the damnation of the gays, and I'm pretty sure hellfire was mentioned. As an unbaptised heathen I had previously managed to avoid most religious opinion, and was shocked at the vitriol. I folded the newsletter into a wedge and surreptitiously jammed it underneath the portable CD player. The next day it had reappeared, sitting underneath the glasses grandad would have needed to read the minuscule font. Ironically the cardinal who wrote the newsletter was likely to be George Pell. But I was lucky enough that the name was not at all memorable to my pubescent self.

I knew I was in the last church service I would ever be guilted into attending sometime in about 2003, when I was watching the parishioners around me- including my mother and sister- praying that the Uniting church would come to their senses about the abominable decision to condone active LGBTIQ+ clergy. That year the rift between my sister and I was deepening, for on her side, though we were living in the same town for the first time since we left home I did not attend any of the church services she was part of as a youth minister in training, and on my part, she would never make time to spend with me away from the church compound, and my perception- real or imagined- of the prayers of her colleagues left a bitter taste in my mouth. As the years have peeled away I believe she has won the competition of having the church hurt her more deeply than I, but that is her story not to tell.

In 2018 the ACL is campaigning to ensure Christians retain their religious right to force same sex attracted children to undergo conversion therapy and harass women at family planning clinics.

Though the power the ACL has in a supposedly secular political environment horrifies me, they do not represent all Christians in Australia. The Uniting church has announced that "soon" it will allow ministers the choice of ordaining LGBTIQ+ unions. No word on this since June and obviously very controversial for some ministers, who are probably at this moment praying to reverse the decision.

If you have faith, church communities within Brisbane that are very supportive of LGBTIQ+ people include Metropolitan Community Church, New Farm and St Marys in exile, South Brisbane.

## Same sex marriage opposition- it's personal

Somewhere in my late teens my aunt, with whom I share many personality traits, physical characteristics and initials " was chosen by god" to become a minister. Her works included book and CD burnings and saving her community from the satan worship practice of Yoga. Later she devoted many vigorous prayers (unasked for and without permission) on my behalf. Back to my Minister Aunt, and the complication of family love. She handmakes a Christmas card laden with prayer and posts it to me every year. Last year after the marriage equity debate the card never came.

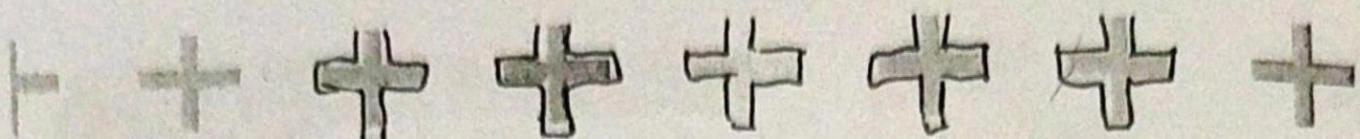
I was indignantly self-righteous. With hardened heart, I felt that I had stood up for myself and taken my queer power back. The marriage equality debate for me was personal, and Facebook turned into a bit of a minefield. I felt for every post shared against marriage equity was actually saying that someone thinks I deserve less: I am worth less. The LGBTQ+ friends sharing personal stories of homophobia was actually worse, as many mirrored my own experiences of homophobia. So when my relative posted something homophobic pitched as a reasonable argument I went in to bat. And I fought dirty with insider knowledge of their beliefs and loads of emotional blackmail. I don't think I changed her view. But I did think I made enough impact to get myself off the Christmas card list, and hopefully make it clear that I did not want to be in the prayer tree. It seemed poetic that marriage equality cost me a Christmas card.

Early January brought a me a card redirected from an old address.

## Dangers of same sex marriage

The closest I have ever been to Marriage was in October 2017. My eggshell heart was prompted by a love song to leap to the conclusion that marriage means forever. This inclination lasted the whole drive to the hospital, but did not stand up to the warm light of day on the walk inside. My partner spent a week hospitalised for infection. I spent the week crossing my fingers and pinning all my hopes on modern science. I work in health, and know the spectrum of possible outcomes, the worst exhausting me with shards of sheer terror. But marriage never has been and never will be kryptonite to bacteria, though would be arguably more valuable to society if it did. With antibiotics and surgery my partner is doing excellently.

It was a shock how easy it was to come to the idea of marriage. When surrounded by the daily discussion of marriage and loads of examples of marriage in popular culture it is not surprising how many people do end up married. One of the huge benefits of being Queer is that we have the power to imagine more. When you are excluded from mainstream simply for being, it is normal to critically question everything, including the way relationships may best work for you. It is certainly a concern that Queers may be pressured into marriage by families and societies and miss out on the amazing diversity that has been so rich in the Queer community when we relegated to the fringes. Once the church has said you are going to hell anyway you don't have to abide by their ideas of propriety and are free to follow your own moral compass.



## Guide for hospitalisation while queer

1. Make sure your biggest advocate and your most desired visitor is listed as your next of kin.

You can change this at any outpatient appointment or admission. For most people this is their primary partner or a family member. If this is more complicated for you and you have complex medical issues consider an advanced health directive.

2. Act like your partner has a right to be there, you don't need to ask permission if you are not hetro or not married. Calmly insist on reasonable things, for example your gender to be listed as the appropriate gender on your wrist band.

3. Make it more awkward for staff to ask your partner to leave than for them to stay.

Using these techniques, most often you will be able to fly under the radar and stretch visiting hours as long as you want.\*

Use your inside voice when speaking. Neither you or your visitors should be drunk, high or smoke in the bathroom. Don't get in bed with your partner- they might hurt you. Supervise children: there are a lot of sharp things in hospitals.

Assume usual stereotypes apply. If you are huge with neck tattoos, have coloured hair or coloured skin go out of your way to be polite to the staff. This really sucks as it is a time of high stress but this remains.

Do ask your partner to bring in games, books, photos and homecooked meals. Of course no-one will appreciate someone bringing a pizza if you have just had a heart attack or chocolate if you are diabetic.

Your partner can assist nursing staff or physios with things like your personal cares if they want to and are physically and emotionally able.

\*ICU and some mental health units have to be more strict on these things.

4. You and your partner should feel free to ask as many questions as you need.

Find out when the doctor will do ward rounds and ask your partner to be there. Feel confident to interrupt medical staff if they don't ask you if you have questions. Write a list if you need to.

Being angry and insisting on speaking to the doctor about an ongoing or chronic issue at midnight is less likely to have good outcomes.

5. If you do feel that you are being treated differently due to your sexuality do ask about how to make a written complaint, and list specific examples. This is most likely to get organisational change, but in my experience you should not need to use this avenue.

Since marriage equality

The good, the bad and the equal

There has been a gay marriage on Ramsey street

Every morning I wake-up, go to work, come home and repeat

I have been asked SO many times when I am getting married

I still regularly have to "come out" as not straight

I have not been invited to ANY weddings

A person got attacked with a chain while waiting for a pizza while queer in my home town Mackay

Our country is lead by someone who voted against same sex marriage

Trans\* people still have to get divorced to affirm their gender in most states and territories

It is a criminal offence to be queer in 72 countries- including 3 I have travelled through

My relationship is as strong as last year

I am still not getting married

At work recently an octogenarian recently informed me of his disappointment that gays can now get married.

"What is the world coming to," he said, "do you know that they are going to let gays get married now, it's just wrong."

"They have been able to get married for a while now, have you noticed a difference?" was my mild reply

"It's against god, it's against the bible."

"But has it made a difference to you?"

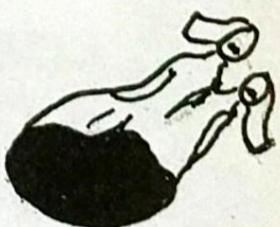
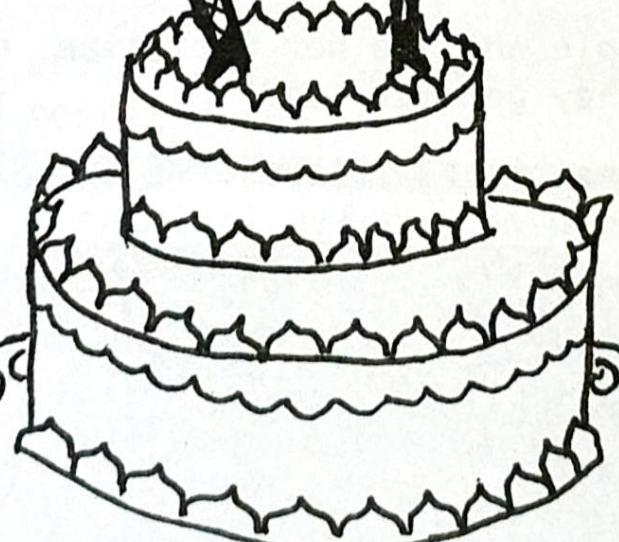
"The bible says it's wrong. You young people are never going to agree with us older people."

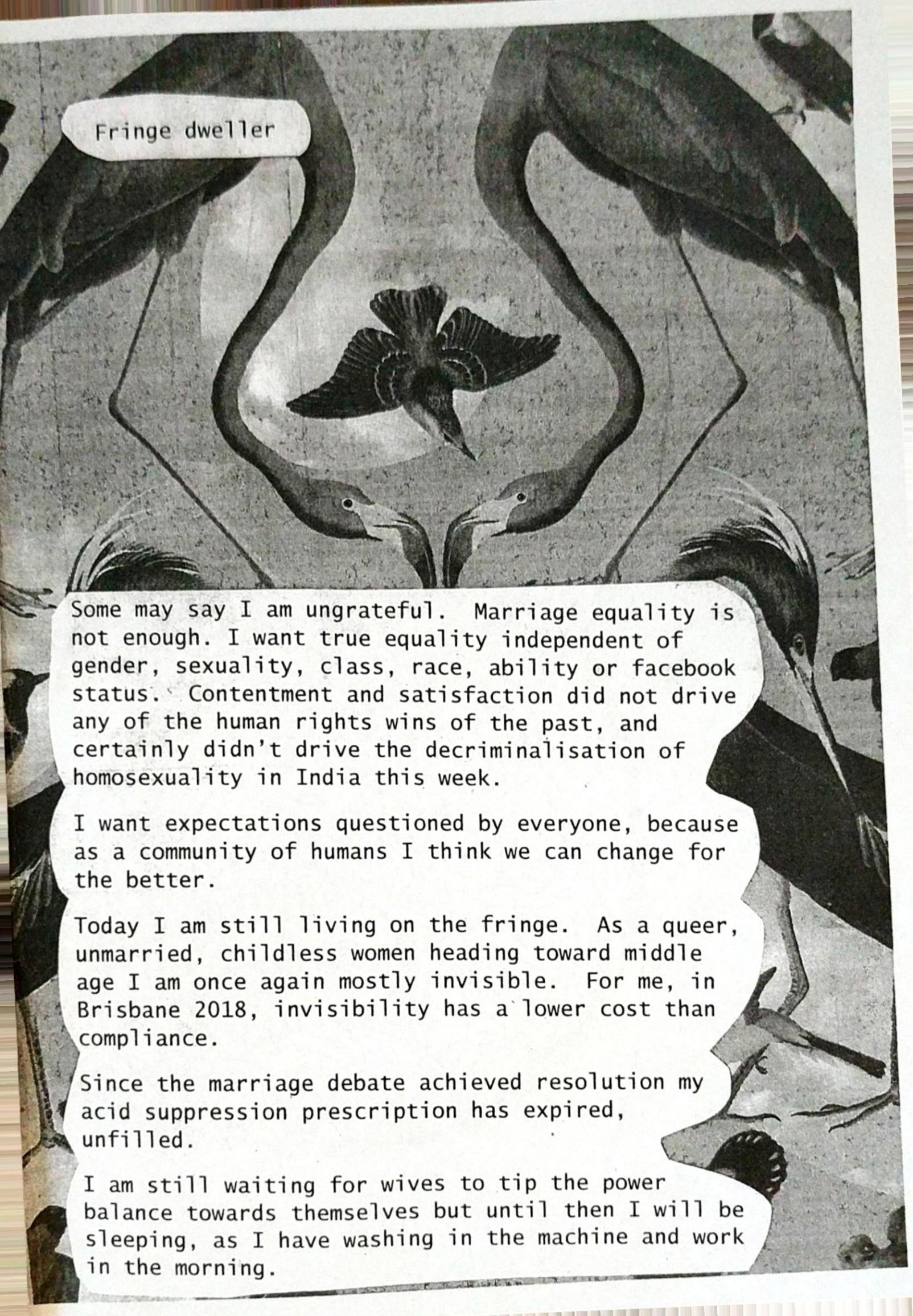
"What about people who are not Christian, does it affect you if they get married?"

"I 'spose you are right, I 'spose it doesn't make a difference to me"

Give  
the Power  
to imagine  
the  
possible

**FREAK**





Fringe dweller

Some may say I am ungrateful. Marriage equality is not enough. I want true equality independent of gender, sexuality, class, race, ability or facebook status. Contentment and satisfaction did not drive any of the human rights wins of the past, and certainly didn't drive the decriminalisation of homosexuality in India this week.

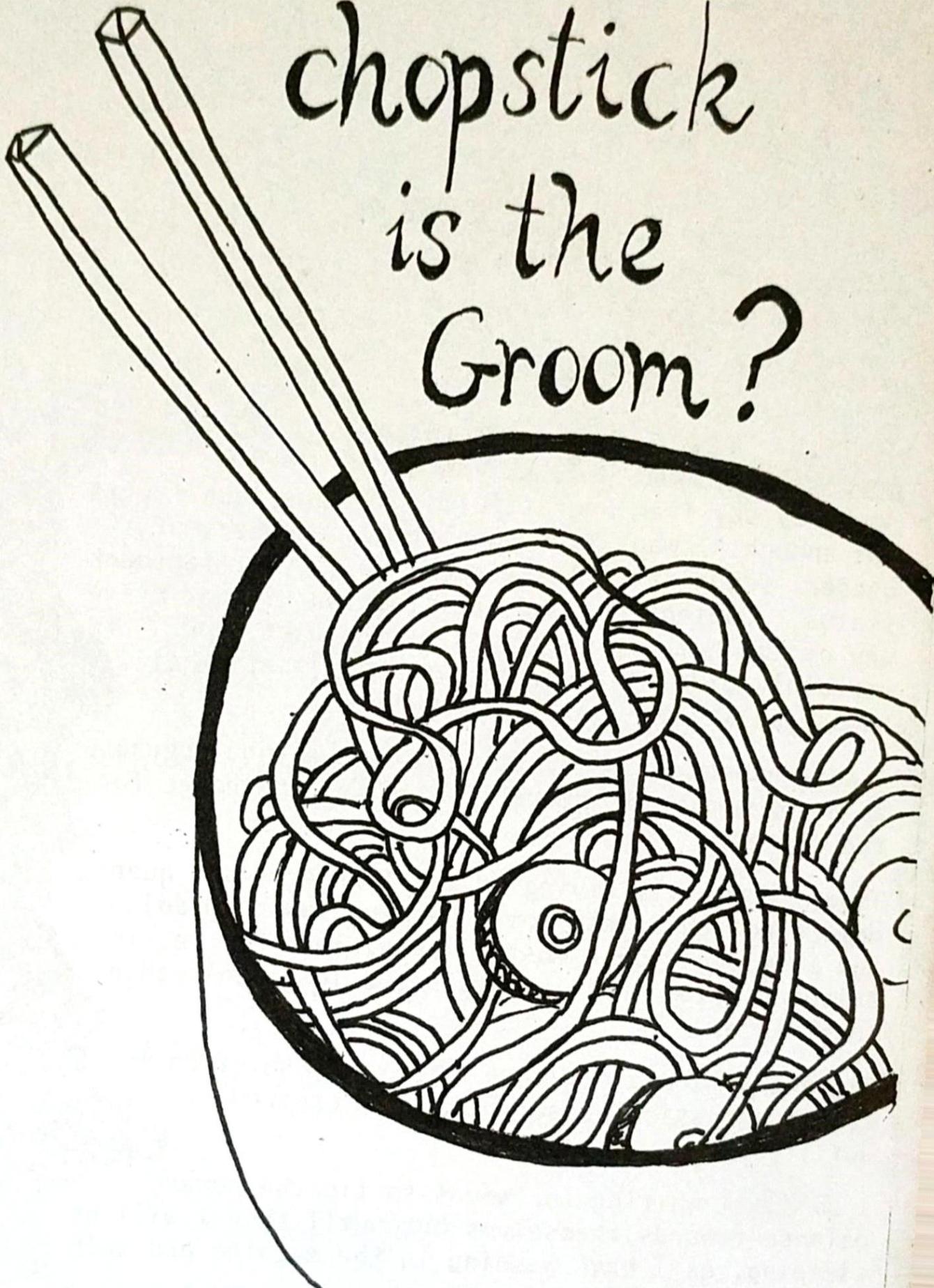
I want expectations questioned by everyone, because as a community of humans I think we can change for the better.

Today I am still living on the fringe. As a queer, unmarried, childless women heading toward middle age I am once again mostly invisible. For me, in Brisbane 2018, invisibility has a lower cost than compliance.

Since the marriage debate achieved resolution my acid suppression prescription has expired, unfilled.

I am still waiting for wives to tip the power balance towards themselves but until then I will be sleeping, as I have washing in the machine and work in the morning.

But which  
chopstick  
is the  
Groom?



# Police seek witnesses after man bashed in homophobic assault in Collingwood

By Tammy Mills & Daniella Miletic

9 April 2018 - 7:48am *Apr 2018*

## VIOLENT ATTACK AGAINST GAY COUPLE ON SUNSHINE COAST

*July 2018*

JESSE JONES — JULY 1, 2018

## Man glassed the face in horror homophobic attack

*Nov 17*

23rd Nov 2017 6:36 AM

Disgusting

FAGGOT

I HOPE YOU

DIE FROM AIDS

## Gay couple attacked in sickening hate crime in Redfern

*APRIL 30, 2018 10:42PM*

*April 18*

## A Gay Couple's Tyre Was Slashed And A Note Was Left On Their Car In A Homophobic Attack

*APRIL 2018*

By MAX KOSLOWSKI *24 APRIL 2018*

## Gay man hospitalised after being beaten with bike chain and called 'faggot' in homophobic attack

*JESS GLASS*

*24 APR 2018*

## Gay ANU student forced to leave dormitory after threatening, homophobic letters

*Apr 2018*

*Wed 11 Apr 2018 at 8:35pm*

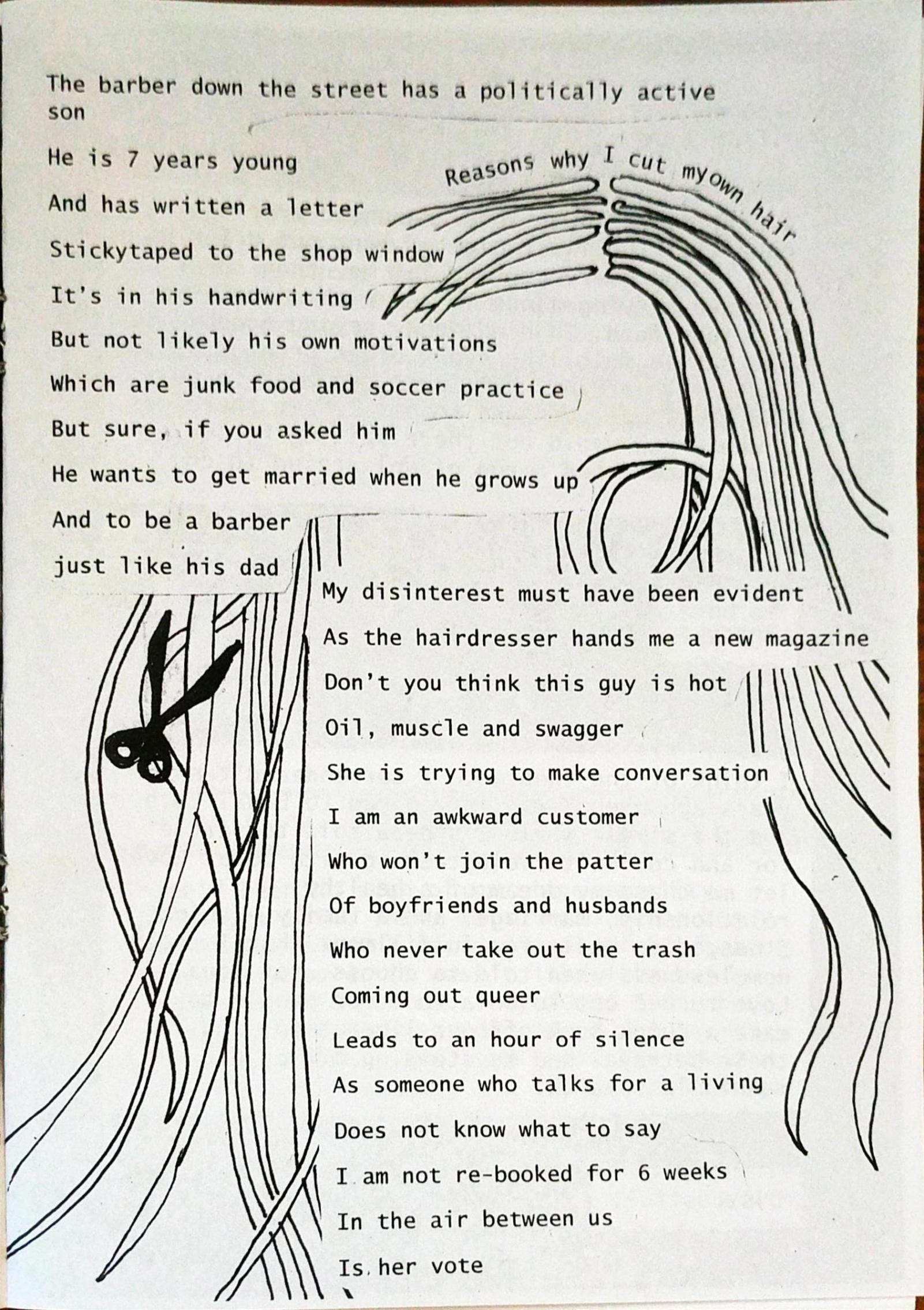
By Jake Evans

It would be remiss of me to discuss the debate on marriage equity in Australia without discussing the deplorable comments in the media about trans\* individuals. That gender and sexuality are different things is apparently a concept that is too nuanced for media and the ACL to grasp. Personally, trans\* friends reported more public harassment in places like buses during the campaign, and certainly the media was feeding the masses the idea that being trans\* is a choice, is apparently contagious and in some way problematic. Though why trans\* people are problematic was never really explained by any source- perhaps because they are not actually problematic. This is especially hurtful as trans\*people are still waiting for any trans\* specific benefit from this legislation. Today, in most states and territories, people who transitioned after marriage still have to get divorced to affirm their gender on their birth certificate until December 9<sup>th</sup> 2018.

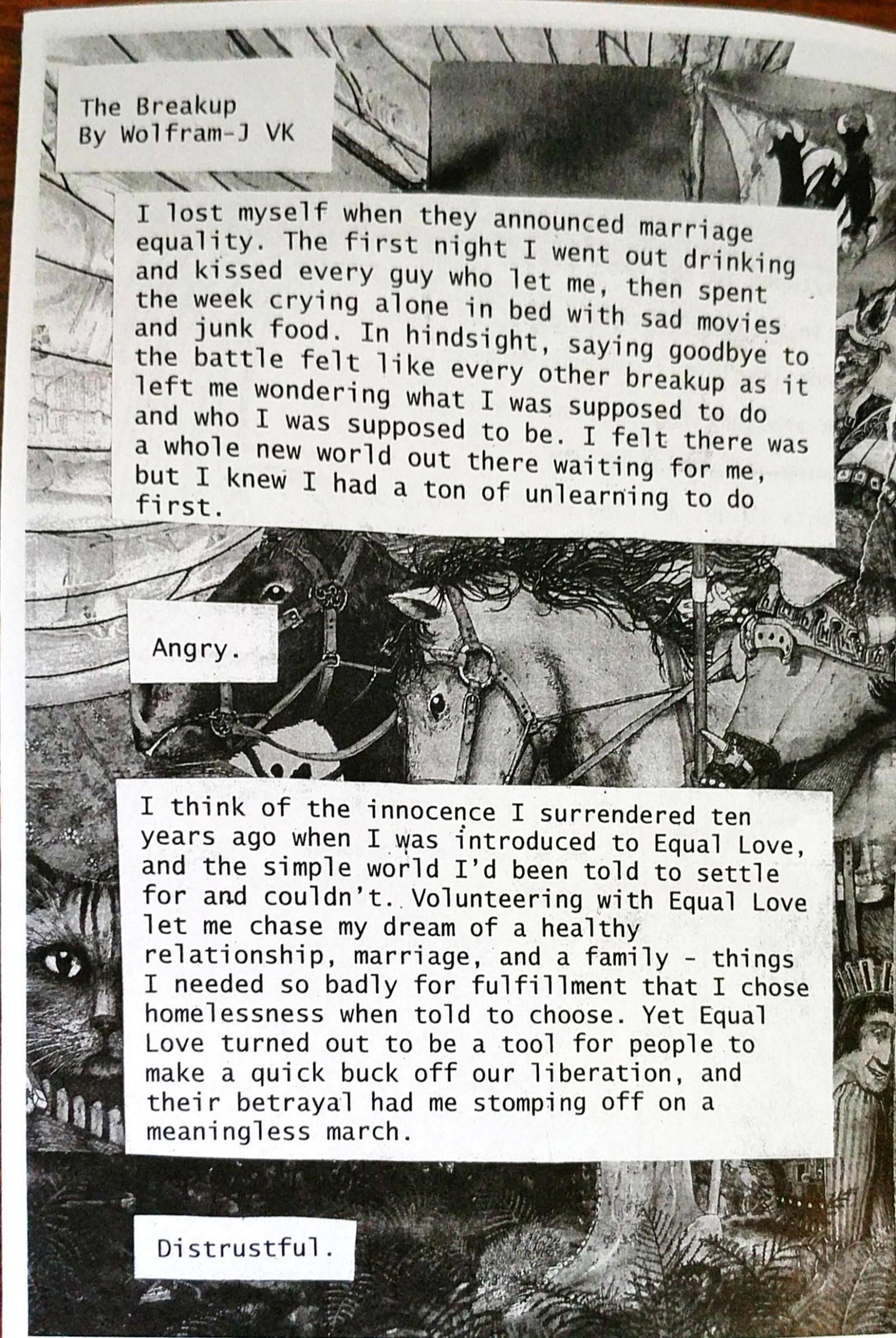
The barber down the street has a politically active son

He is 7 years young  
And has written a letter  
Sticky-taped to the shop window  
It's in his handwriting  
But not likely his own motivations  
Which are junk food and soccer practice  
But sure, if you asked him  
He wants to get married when he grows up  
And to be a barber  
just like his dad

Reasons why I cut my own hair



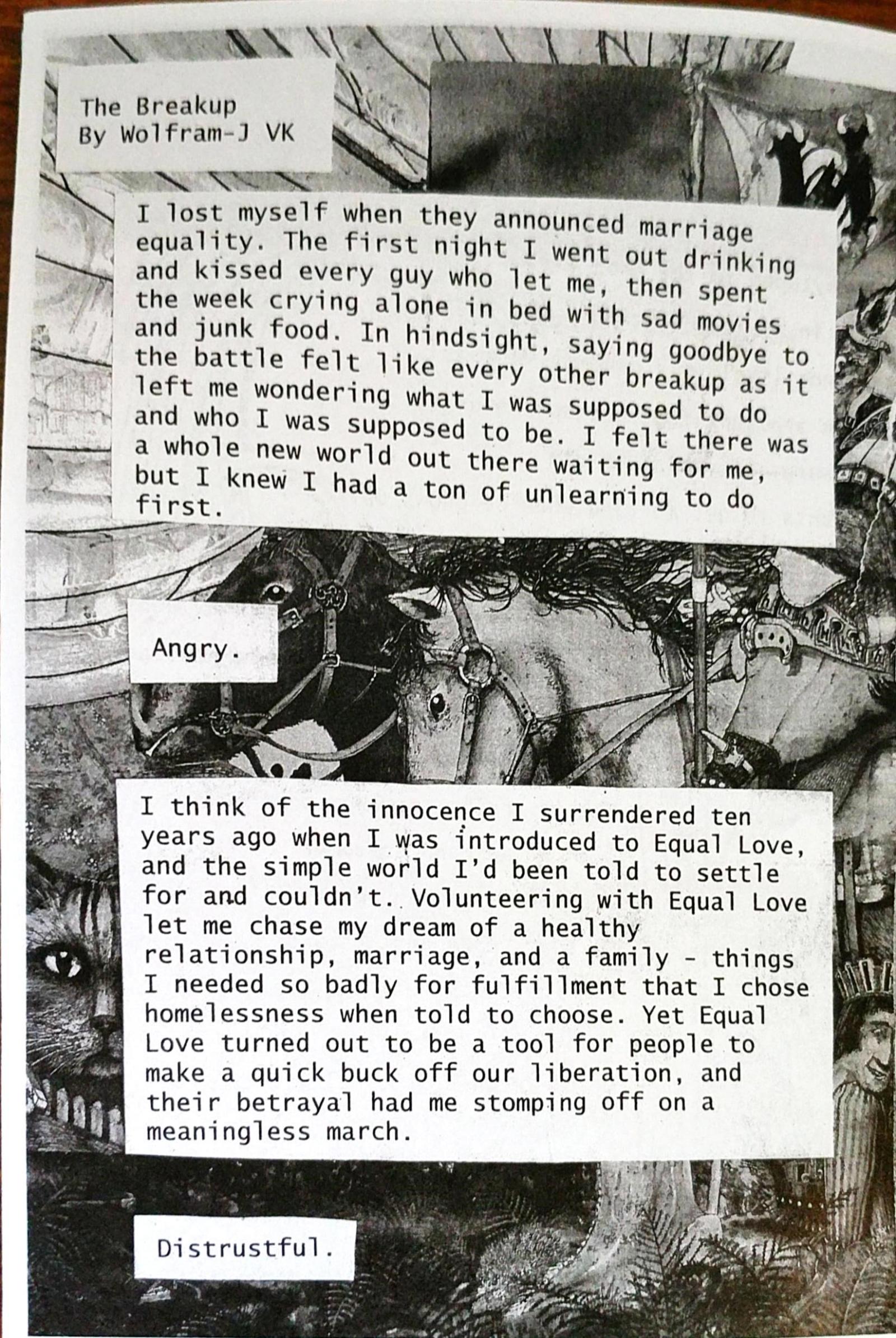
My disinterest must have been evident  
As the hairdresser hands me a new magazine  
Don't you think this guy is hot  
Oil, muscle and swagger  
She is trying to make conversation  
I am an awkward customer  
Who won't join the patter  
Of boyfriends and husbands  
Who never take out the trash  
Coming out queer  
Leads to an hour of silence  
As someone who talks for a living  
Does not know what to say  
I am not re-booked for 6 weeks  
In the air between us  
Is her vote



## The Breakup

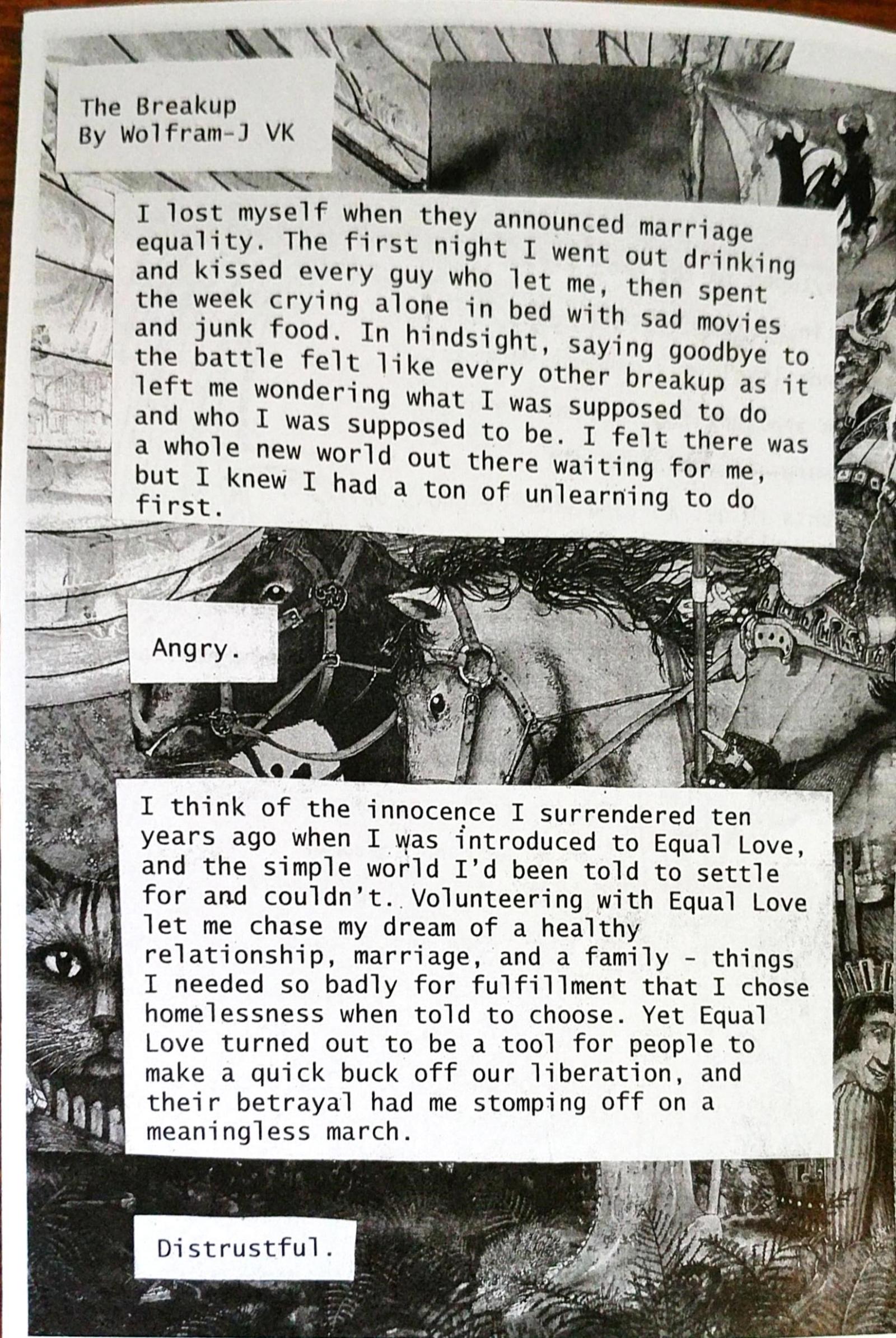
By Wolfram-J VK

I lost myself when they announced marriage equality. The first night I went out drinking and kissed every guy who let me, then spent the week crying alone in bed with sad movies and junk food. In hindsight, saying goodbye to left me wondering what I was supposed to do and who I was supposed to be. I felt there was a whole new world out there waiting for me, but I knew I had a ton of unlearning to do first.



Angry.

I think of the innocence I surrendered ten years ago when I was introduced to Equal Love, and the simple world I'd been told to settle for and couldn't. Volunteering with Equal Love let me chase my dream of a healthy relationship, marriage, and a family - things I needed so badly for fulfillment that I chose homelessness when told to choose. Yet Equal Love turned out to be a tool for people to make a quick buck off our liberation, and their betrayal had me stomping off on a meaningless march.



Distrustful.

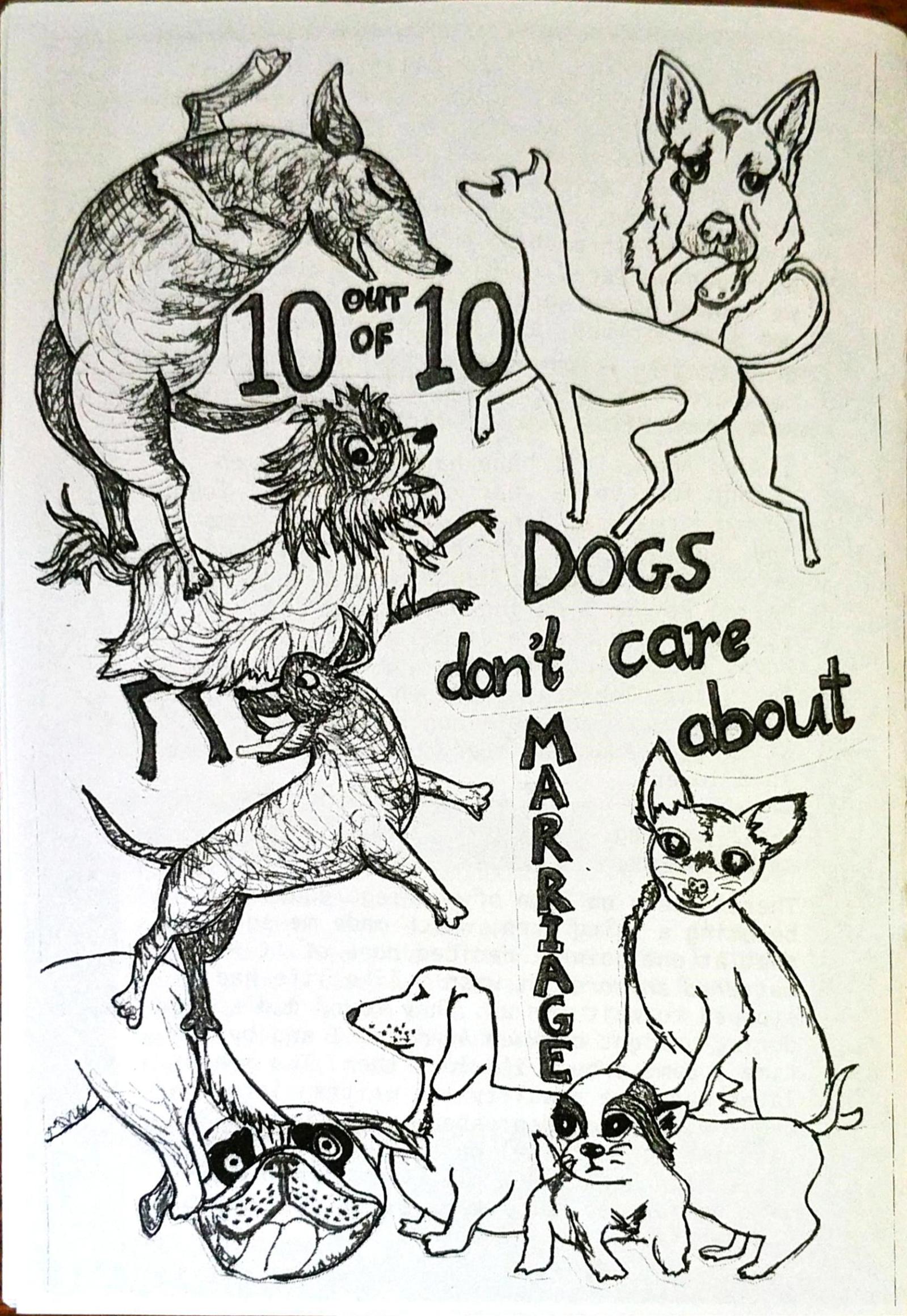
I regret letting so many relationships just fizzle out. I doubt I was alone in feeling the pointlessness to it all; or, that it was easier to rub someone off on Grindr than to work on a relationship with no definable purpose. After all, we were told for so long that our relationships meant nothing that whenever we faced trials in our relationships we looked at our prospects, compared them to our alternatives, and just walked away.

Immature..

I miss Adam. This babe had prodded me on Grindr for over a year when suddenly I found them everywhere: around campus, at events, and, worst of all, stuck in my head. Suddenly we were spending our lunch breaks together and having sex in a dating-but-not-dating kind of way as I tried to convince them we wouldn't work. Several months into our relationship we faced the plebiscite as both partners and as comrades - as equals - and a year later I still feel Adam was everything I'd ever needed in a lover.

Self-pitying.

There'd been no sign of marriage equality becoming a thing then, which made me so angry that at one point I decided *none of it fucking mattered anymore*. It wasn't like life had stopped to wait for us. They found dad's body during a fight between Adam and I and by the time I came around I'd lost them. Two months later marriage equality was written into law, I got wild, then depressed, then decided it was time to stop feeling sorry for myself. After all there's a whole world out there just waiting for me, and I'm ready to unlearn these bad habits.



10 OUT  
OF 10

DOGS  
don't care  
about

MARRIAGE

Peeping eyes check you comply

dg.2

To the code that's prescribed

Our green shoots may look like yours

But our roots grow twisted and tuberous

Obtuse or voracious

*Safely unseen in the rich moist earth*

a wonderfully grotesque harvest

Afraid to be unearthed

As a rejection of something so integral to self

May fuse our joints

and freeze our fingertips into congruent shapes

We exchange hypervigilance

For a place at the table

We don't tell you

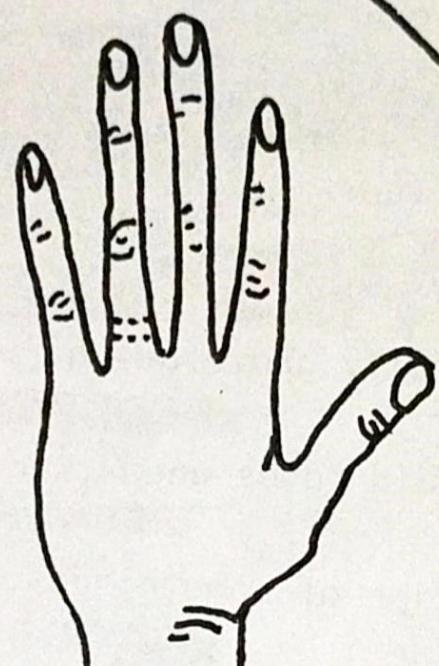
Our bridal waltz

Is a flock of lorikeets

Regular only in its irregularity

As nature intended

SONG



whole  
and  
Complete  
Without a  
ring

Poems from suburbia

The neighbour mows his lawn like clockwork

Weekends leaving parallel clippings in his wake

Haphazard is more my style

Green and weeds exploding towards the sun

We are told we look like renters

~~As though we should be insulted~~

And aspire to a class of regular lawn maintenance

My gender is encouraged to outsource this piece of humanity

But I refuse to value my white-collar job above dirty work

Instead, I stand on the footpath in my worst clothes and be seen

Sweaty torn and able, I level the grass on my terms

Earbuds and the raw of the motor dulling bystander comments

Today I am not breast/cunt /thighs

but muscle/joint/capability

Mowing my lawn into spirals

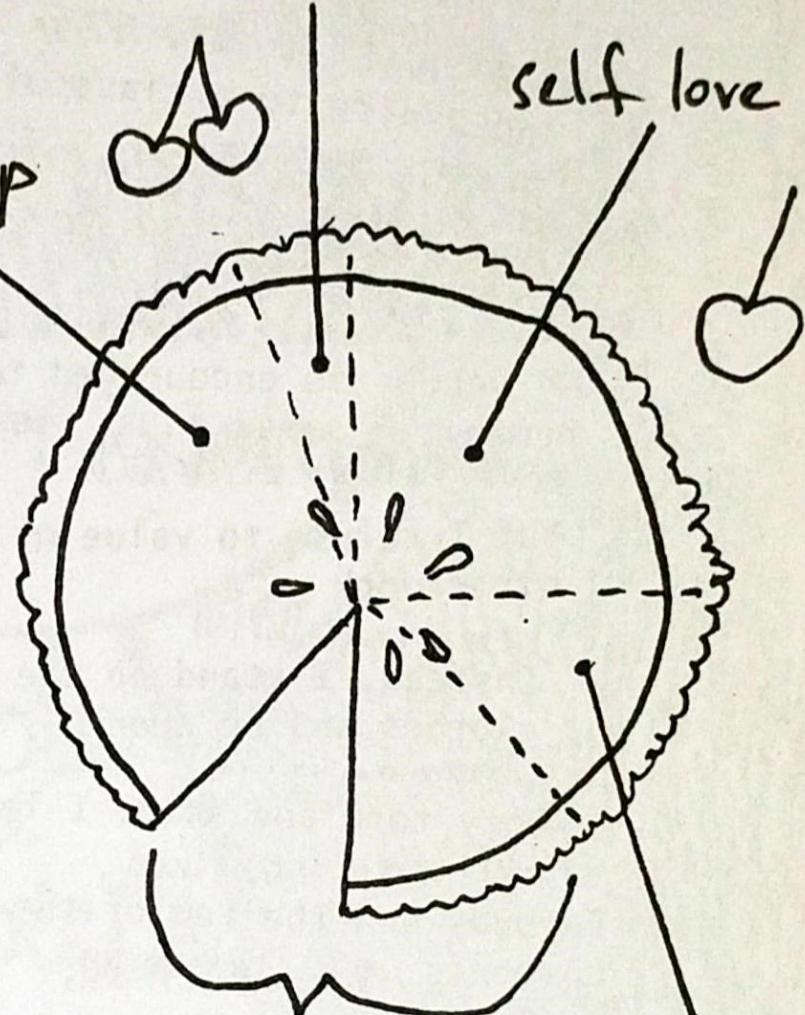
# Queer Love

## Pie\*



Queer  
love

Queer  
friendship



monogamous  
love

polyamorous  
love

\* comes in  
vegan

